

Delta Independent Science Board Educational Briefing Questionnaire

1. Program Title: Section 401 Water Quality Certification Program
2. Lead Agency/Department for Program: Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board
3. Brief Description of Program: The Central Valley Regional Board regulates dredge and fill activities that result in a waste discharge to waters of the U.S. These activities are required to apply for a Water Quality Certification. Typical projects that require certification include new subdivisions, bridges, roads, pipeline construction; levee reconstruction; wetland habitat improvement; pier installation; boat harbor dredging; gravel mining; flood control excavation; and minor stream crossings. Dredging of the two large Ports in the Delta, and San Joaquin and Sacramento Deep Water Ship Channels also require a Water Quality Certification which is issued by staff in the Dredging Unit. The Central Valley Regional Board is the primary agency responsible for dredge permitting, although the US Army Corps of Engineers and the California Department of Fish and Game also have regulatory jurisdiction. Water quality impacts associated with dredging projects are regulated by two means – a Section 401 Water Quality Certification and Waste Discharge Requirements.
4. Purpose and Objectives of Program: The purpose of the Water Quality Certification Program is to protect the Central Valley Region's vast wetland resources in its rivers, streams, and pools. The Clean Water Act §404 requires dredge and fill projects that propose to discharge to waters of the U.S. obtain a federal permit, and pursuant to CWA §401, applicants must obtain a water quality certification from the respective state.
5. Timeline for Program Objectives: Ongoing
6. Current Status of Program: Ongoing and active
7. Contact Information for Lead Staff of this Program:

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8. Associated Total Annual Budget for Program: The 401 Permitting Unit receives between 350 to 425 applications per year. Monitoring requirements associated with permit conditions vary based on the type of activity, number of sites included in the activity, and location of the activity. Generally, monitoring requirements can be required before, during, and after the dredge and fill activity.
9. URL, if a Website is Available:
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/water_quality_certification/
http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/dredging/
10. How does adaptive management play a role in your program? For dredging projects, General Orders may be written for ongoing permitting requirements to expedite appropriate beneficial reuse of dredged material for economic activities, while providing the highest degree of water quality protection. These General Orders are developed with input from multiple federal and state agencies with regards to an effective long-term management strategy for dredging and beneficial reuse.
11. Any additional information that would be helpful to understand the program: